
Torch

Spring 4-1-1979

Torch, Spring 1979

Cedarville College

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TORCH ISSUE Vol. 2 No. 1

TORCH

MINISTERING TO THE FRIENDS OF CEDARVILLE COLLEGE



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Front Cover

The lily has long been symbolic of the Easter season. This beautiful stained glass window reminds those who see it of the resurrection of our Lord. (photo by Steve Keller)

Back Cover

Ezekiel 43:4 speaks about our Lord's second coming, describing how He will come to the temple through the Eastern Gate in Jerusalem. (photo by Lee Turner)



"... the things that
thou hast heard from me
among many witnesses,
the same commit thou to
faithful men,
who shall be able
to teach others also."
2 Timothy 2:2

The Cedarville College
Torch is published quarterly
for the alumni and friends of
Cedarville College.

Comments, constructive
criticism and requests for
reprints should be directed
to:

CEDARVILLE COLLEGE
CEDARVILLE, OHIO
45314

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TORCH

(USPS 073-340)

Vol. 2 No. 1

Spring Issue, April 1979

Published quarterly by:

Cedarville College

Cedarville, OH 45314

Paul Dixon, President

NO PAID SUBSCRIPTIONS

Second class postage paid at

Cedarville, OH and at

Additional mailing offices

POSTMASTER, please send

Form 3579 to

Torch

Cedarville College
Cedarville, OH 45314



**Dr. Paul Dixon,
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“... whereof we are witnesses”

Peter, the *denier*, stands before the multitude. God has healed the lame man at the gate of the temple. The people have rushed to behold this miracle in the life of one so familiar. When Peter sees it, he seizes the opportunity to preach Christ.

Suddenly, he begins talking about their denial of Christ. These people know Peter. They are not strangers to what had happened previously in Jerusalem. Was Peter not the one who had denied Him thrice? He would talk to them about denial?

Yet, with all boldness and without hesitancy he cried, “But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Author of life, *whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses*” (Acts 3:14-15).

There it is! That is the key! Don’t miss it! What changed Peter the denier into Peter the witness? *A risen Christ!*

Somehow the knowledge of an arrested, soon-to-be-crucified Jesus had sapped him of his spiritual strength and enthusiasm. Now he is alive, bold, pointed, empowered and effective in his witness. The difference was an empty tomb and a resurrected Saviour. And that does make the difference!

Most of us Christians are not witnesses at all, let alone bold

witnesses. Our biggest problem is fear—just like Peter. We wonder what people will say and think. The same Person and truth that transformed Peter can also change us. Jesus Christ is alive!

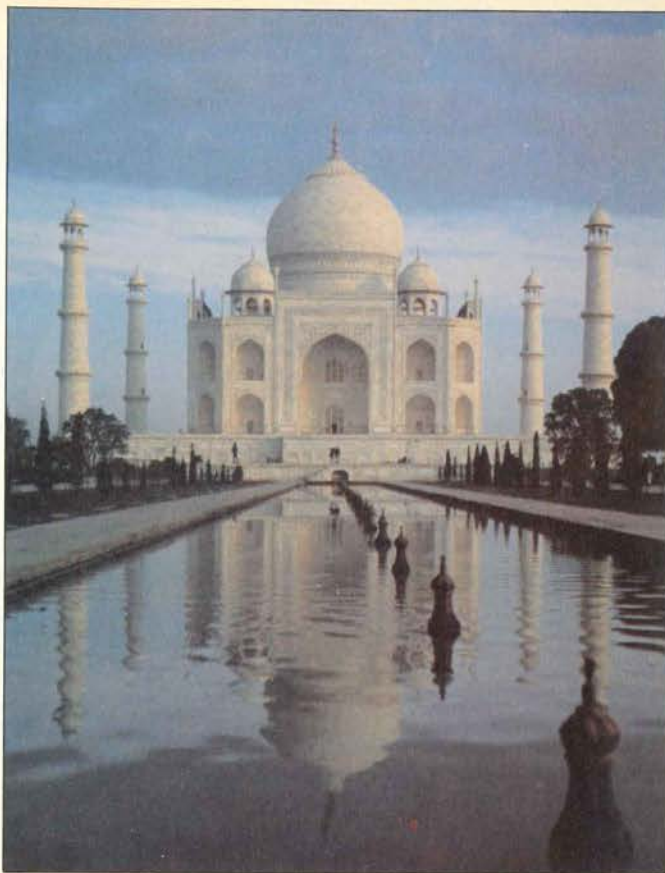
It was the 25th anniversary of the United Nations. The leaders of the world gathered to honor then Secretary General U Thant. One after another, they stood to praise this well-known man. Time passed—finally all had saluted him. Slowly, quietly, the small-of-stature U Thant stood. He spoke deliberately: “If I am everything you say I am, and if I have done everything you say I have done, I want you to know that I owe it all to Buddha!” For the next thirty minutes he witnessed of his god.

But before Buddha died he said, “I am still searching for truth!” He never claimed that he would come back from the dead; furthermore, he didn’t.

Before His death, Jesus Christ said, “I am the truth!”—and He is. He foretold that He would arise from the dead—and He did!

If U Thant could stand before those people and testify for a dead Buddha, we can surely stand up and be counted for Jesus Christ.

We serve a risen Saviour. Let us deny Him no longer, but be bold like Peter.



The Resurrection and Salvation

Richard T. McIntosh

In the desert sands of Egypt stands the Great Pyramid of Cheops which was built as a fitting and final resting place for a man who had ruled in great splendor from 2590 to 2568 B.C. In Agra, India, is found one of the most beautiful buildings in the world. It is a perfect example of Islamic architecture and one of the most costly tombs in history. It was built in the 17th century by the Mughul emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his favorite wife, Mumtaz Mahal. Taj Mahal, which means "Chosen One of the Palace," is a shortened form of her name. St. Peter's Cathedral in Rome is one of the most famous Catholic churches in Europe and the supposed tomb of St. Peter.

But in Israel, where these three continents meet, there stands today an empty tomb. It was an unpretentious tomb. It was a borrowed burial place. This tomb was occupied for only three days and three nights by Jesus of Nazareth.

Then, by the power of God, He rose from the grave. Jesus had anticipated this resurrection in His teaching. Its emptiness is one of the best authenticated facts of history. The resurrection which took place there was declared repeatedly in apostolic witnessing and preaching. The acceptance of the truth of the resurrection is essential for eternal salvation. This empty tomb is evidence of Christ's triumph over death and the crowning support for His claim to deity (Rom. 1:4).

The Resurrection Anticipated

The resurrection of Christ was anticipated in Old Testament prophecy (Psa. 16:10) and in its typology. Jesus said, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matt. 12:40). This prophecy was literally

fulfilled in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

During his early ministry, while attending his first Passover in Jerusalem, Jesus had said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19). He spoke this concerning His body and the resurrection. When Jesus was risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them and they believed the Scriptures and this statement of Jesus (John 2:22).

Jesus clearly anticipated this event and repeatedly taught His disciples about it. After the confession of the deity of Christ by Peter, Jesus once again announced his resurrection: "From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day" (Matt 16:21; see also 17:1, 23; 20:19; 26:32). The gospels record Christ

spoke seventeen times in anticipation of His resurrection.

The Resurrection Authenticated

When Jesus rose from the dead, He did not appear to just one or two favored disciples. He appeared to a variety of individuals in different settings both in Judea and Galilee over a period of forty days. Thus Luke, the beloved physician and careful historian, states that Jesus had "showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen by them forty days" (Acts 1:3). Probably the New Testament does not record all of the appearances of Christ, but rather is selective in assembling its evidence. The evidence presented is impressive.

Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene as she lingered weeping by the empty tomb (John 20:14-18). He appeared to the women as they ran from the empty tomb to tell the



disciples the angelic message that He was risen from the dead (Matt. 28:8-10). Jesus appeared privately to Peter (Luke 24:34; 1 Cor. 15:5). He walked and talked with two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13-31).

Jesus appeared to the ten disciples on the first day of the week when Thomas (called Didymus) was not with them (John 20:19-24). He appeared to all eleven eight days later (John 20:24-29). He appeared by the sea of Galilee to the seven disciples who had gone fishing (John 21:1-23). It was probably also in Galilee that He appeared to the disciples and the five hundred brethren at one time (1 Cor. 15:6).

The resurrected Christ had a private interview with his half-brother

James (1 Cor. 15:7), and through the Holy Spirit He gave the commands for evangelism and missionary activity to the eleven before His ascension back into heaven (Matt. 28:16-20; Mark 16:14-20; Luke 24:33-53; Acts 1:2-12).

The Resurrection Announced

The resurrection of Jesus was not to be kept a secret. It was announced, proclaimed and witnessed by his followers. The replacement for Judas Iscariot was to join with the other apostles as a witness of the resurrection (Acts 1:22). The heart of Peter's message on the day of Pentecost had to do with Jesus whom the Jews had crucified but whom God had raised up from the dead (Acts 2:23-36).

After the healing of the lame man in Acts 3, Peter declared that the Jews had "killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, of whom we are witnesses" (v. 15). The leaders of the Jews arrested Peter and John because they "taught the people and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:2). After they were filled by the Holy Spirit, the apostles with great power gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Acts 4:33). Peter declared to the Gentiles gathered in the home of Cornelius in Caesarea that God had raised up Jesus on the third day and shown Him openly and that some witnesses ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead (Acts 10:40, 41).

Paul preached at Antioch in Pisidia that God had raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 13:29-37). In the synagogue in Thessalonica Paul reasoned with them out of the scriptures, "opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead" (Acts 17:2,3). In the market place in Athens, Paul preached to them Jesus and the resurrection (Acts 17:17, 18).

In his letters to young churches Paul wrote frequently and fervently concerning the resurrection of Jesus (Rom. 1:4; 6:5; 1 Cor. 15; Phil. 3:10). Peter also wrote of this in his first epistle (1:3; 3:21).

The apostles' testimony of the resurrection, based on their personal witness, was preeminent in their ministry. This was a message of the greatest importance because it would

lead to the eternal salvation of those who believed it.

The Resurrection Accepted

But how does the message of the resurrection fit in with the gospel that must be accepted and believed if one is to be saved? What part does it play in obtaining a personal relationship with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ? The answer is that the resurrection of Christ is the very heart of the gospel message which must be received and believed. As Paul wrote,

Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel . . . by which also ye are saved. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, that Christ died for your sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15: 1-4).

It is this gospel message which has the transforming power of salvation. Some may try to simplify salvation to the point of only believing in Jesus (Acts 16:31) or to merely calling upon the name of the Lord (Rom. 10:13), but one of the most clear and comprehensive statements of what is involved in the sinner's receiving salvation hinges on an acceptance of Christ's resurrection:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom 10:9,10).

It is on the basis of this verbal confession of Jesus as Lord and the genuine belief that God raised Jesus from the dead that a person is saved. Such a response of faith results in being declared righteous, while audible confession results in salvation. This is the vital relationship between the resurrection and salvation.

In the New Testament the resurrection was anticipated by Christ Himself; it was authenticated by many witnesses; it was announced by many preachers; and when this truth is accepted by faith, salvation will result in the life of the one who believes it.

Mr. McIntosh is an Associate Professor of Bible at Cedarville College.

THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

James T. Jeremiah

The bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ is more than a beautiful thought or a religious concept. It is an historical fact. It is a fact so persuasive that many who have sought to disprove it have been converted to Christ by the truth they have discovered.

Theological liberals have said that Christ's disciples only imagined that Christ arose from the dead, but the Bible record makes it quite clear that at first the disciples did not believe in the resurrection. Men do not imagine what they do not believe.

When the early Christians were convinced by the many infallible proofs of the resurrection (Acts 1:3), it made a great difference in their lives.

It made courageous men out of cowards and willing martyrs out of those who had forsaken Him at the cross. This change in itself is a strong proof of the fact that He rose from the dead.

The resurrection of Christ has similar transforming power for men today. Jesus said, "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live" (John 5:25). This refers to a present day resurrection in the experience of every person who receives Christ as Saviour. The Lord said of this salvation experience, "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:19).

Paul prayed that the Ephesian Christians might understand "what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:19-20; cf. Eph. 2:6). Today, everyone who has experienced the new birth has experienced the resurrection power of Christ. Like everything else in the Christian life, this great truth becomes a reality in our daily living only as we accept it by faith and reckon its power to be ours.

Someone said, "If a man does not know a flower by name and a poem by heart, it is no indictment of the beauty of a rose or the charm of the poem." If we bear the name of Christ, but give no other evidence of our relationship to Him, if we go through the forms of godliness, but live powerless lives, it is a thousand reproaches to us. To be powerless when Christ has made all power available to us is to be in a state for which we have no excuse that is not self-incriminating.

Paul testified that he had "won" or "gained" Christ and was "found in him" (Phil. 3:8, 9). And yet he said, "That I might know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being

made conformable unto his death" (Phil. 3:10). Even though the apostle had a saving knowledge of Christ, he desired a deeper personal experience of the resurrection power of Christ. In commenting on this truth, Merrill C. Tenney writes, "He wanted to enter into the very life of Christ to experience it with Him, and thus to gain as full an understanding of His person as possible." He wanted to know Him, not simply know about Him.

To know Him in this way is to know the power of His resurrection—the power which raised Him from the dead. It is the power which is inherent in His resurrection and available to the believer through identification with Him. That power can and should become effective in His saints, enabling them to overcome the resistance of all that is contrary to godliness. Through faith we are "justified by his blood" (Rom. 5:9), and "saved by his life" (Rom. 5:10). His death delivers us from the *penalty* of sin. The resurrected, living Christ saves us from the *power* of sin.

Thus, the resurrection of Christ enables the Christian to be victorious over sin. "When a man is dead, he is freed from the claims of sin, so if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him" (Rom. 6:7, 8; Williams.) Adam committed *one* sin which doomed the whole human





race. Christ died for *all* sin so that doomed sinners might be saved. His resurrection is the power that conquers sin in our lives. "Reckon . . . yourselves . . . alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let no sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lust thereof" (Rom. 6:11, 12). The resurrection of Christ is vital to our victory over sin, for "if Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:17).

By the power of His resurrection, Satan is a defeated foe. "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Col. 2:15). He bruised Satan's head (Gen. 3:15) and thus destroyed the devil who had the power of death (Heb. 2:14). The God of peace will bruise Satan under the believer's feet (Rom. 16:20); therefore, no Christian need give "place to the devil" (Eph. 4:27). Instead, we can and should resist Him (James 4:7).

An old beekeeper tells of finding a snake on the floor of a hive. The snake had crawled into the hive and was stung to death. Unable to remove it from the hive, the bees sealed over the intruder with wax. The wax prevented contamination in the hive. By the resurrection, Christ "stung" that old serpent, Satan, to death and gave the Christian the power to keep him from ruining and contaminating his soul. The evil ruler of this world has been condemned and, as a result, the believer's victory has been

guaranteed (John 16:11).

The world united to crucify Christ. Pilate put a sign over His cross written in Greek (the language of the learned), Latin (the language of the government), and Hebrew (the language of religion). All three united to take His life. By the power of His resurrection, that world has been conquered. He said, "I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). His resurrection is the seal to the provision of His death. He "who gave himself for our sin that he might deliver us from this present evil world" (Gal. 1:4). Since in Christ the Christian has conquered the world (that is, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life"), he is not to love it, but live a life separated from it (1 John 2:15-17). For a Christian to continue to live like the world is either to deny or ignore the power of Christ's resurrection.

Years ago, Arthur Hedley wrote, "Our great need is to experience the power of His resurrection. We need this power to overcome self; to master sin; to triumph over pride, prejudice, jealousy, envy, avarice, impurity, impatience, bad temper; to walk in holiness and love; and to win souls for the Saviour. Our Lord waits for us to lay claim to this power." When we are willing to submit our all to Him, recognizing Him as the Lord of our lives, then the old life of defeat shall go and we shall be "strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might" (Eph. 6:10).

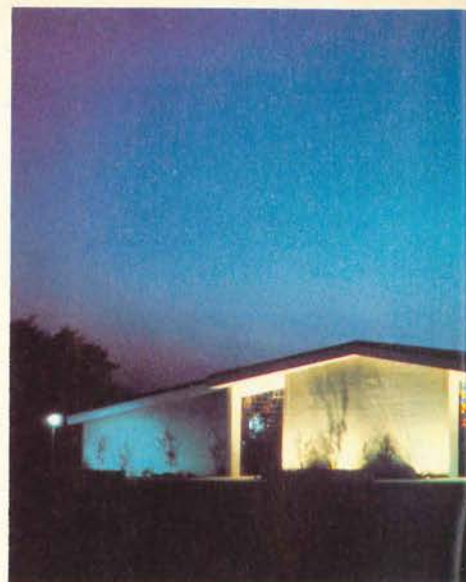
An artist painted two pictures of

Christ. The first showed the Saviour as the patient, understanding, gentle and forgiving Lord that He is. The Christ of the second picture, however, appeared unlovely and almost ugly. The portrait revealed impatience, discontent and anger, which was inconsistent with what the Bible teaches about Him. In explaining the difference between the two pictures, the artist said, "The first Christ is the one we see in the gospels, but the second is the Christ I see today mirrored in the lives of people who, except for their name, would never be recognized as followers of the Saviour. Like my picture, these Christians are only caricatures of Christ."

We Bible-believing fundamentalists are right in defending the faith, denouncing error and refusing to cooperate in any ecumenical meeting with those who deny the vicarious death of Christ and His bodily resurrection. We are not right when we are filled with bitterness, criticism, prejudice, jealousy, lust and spiritual deadness. When these traits characterize our lives we deny the power of His resurrection which we so loudly profess to believe. Are we then any more effective in our witness for Christ than those who blatantly deny His bodily resurrection?

Dr. Jeremiah is Chancellor of Cedarville College.

CEDARVILLE IN THE SPRINGTIME



Academic

With a sincere desire to assist young people in the preparation of their chosen vocation, the Cedarville College faculty numbers over 60 dedicated men and women who teach their courses in light of Scriptural truth.

We would encourage you to come to the campus and attend some classes. Our faculty members would be happy to meet with you and answer any questions you might have about the academic program.

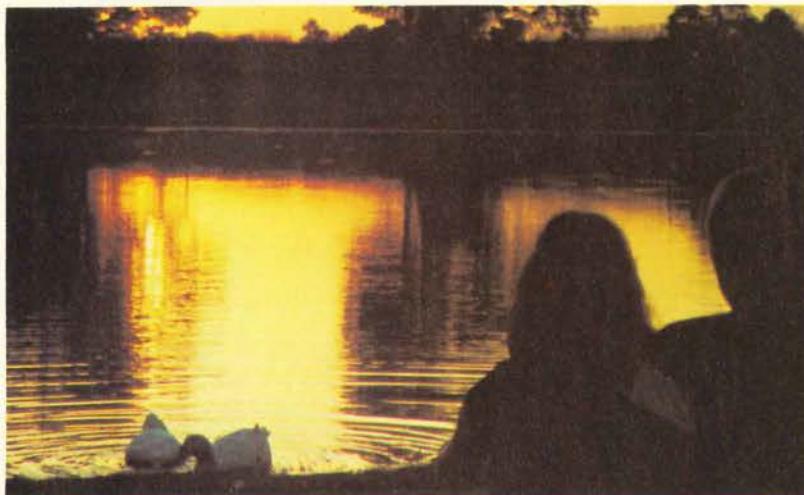
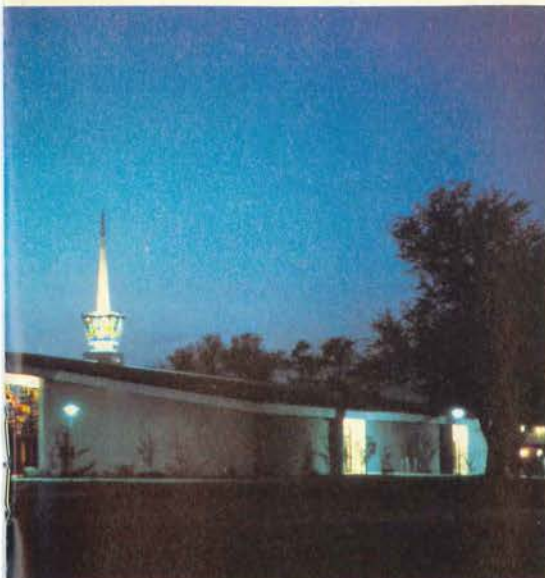
Social

Concerts, lectures, plays, banquets, all-school parties, retreats and a strong intramural sports program are a part of Cedarville students' activities schedule. On the average, 7 major weekend events are sponsored each quarter with nationally and internationally known speakers and performers. There is "something happening" every weekend on the Cedarville campus. Check the schedule of events on the opposite page and plan now to visit the campus sometime during Spring Quarter.

Spiritual

Students can develop a personal ministry during their college years at Cedarville through Christian service opportunities that are as varied as the students themselves. Statewide and locally, students may choose to put their faith into action through ministries with various musical groups, campus evangelism, the puppet team and other special outreaches. In addition, each dorm has student personnel assistants who assist the resident advisor in counseling students with spiritual needs.





A GOOD TIME TO VISIT!

- | | |
|------------|--|
| April 12 | Word of Life "Passion Play" |
| April 21 | Suzanne Johnson and David Baker
Sacred Classical Vocal Concert |
| May 4-5 | NCCAA National Track Meet |
| 4-6 | Parent's Weekend |
| 5 | Cedar Day
Concert Chorale Home Concert |
| May 10-12 | Spring Drama Production |
| 12 | A Day for Preacher's Pals
(3rd-6th graders) |
| June 2 | 82nd Annual Commencement |
| June 25-29 | Accommodations available for
GARBC Conference. Reser-
vations through the Director
of Student Activities. |

For further information write to:

The Admissions Office, Cedarville College,
Cedarville, Ohio 45314



FAR BETTER

Joseph M. Stowell

Recently my five year old proclaimed, "Dad, Jesus took the scariness out of dying!" That affirmation of truth tersely wraps up the great future significance of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Strangely, however, at another time he shyly confessed to me, "I don't want to go to heaven!" In his young mind a love for life, family and friends made an unfamiliar heaven seem unwanted.

All of us are grateful that Christ has taken the "scariness out of dying," yet many of us are so comfortable on earth that the allure of heaven is diminished. To many of our minds the best thing about heaven is that it eliminates the alternative. Our tainted expectations envision a boring eternity of cloud-sitting while strumming a five-stringed harp or eternal hours of singing in a choir. No wonder we have difficulty warming up to the idea.

What is heaven really like? The Bible does not clearly answer that question. The Scripture is more specific about the physical properties of God's eternal home than it is about our involvement there.

One thing the Bible does make clear, however, is that in heaven we will be with Christ, which Paul proclaims to be "far better" (Phil.

1:23). This statement was made when Paul was facing a possible death sentence from Caesar. For him the resurrection of Christ obviously had removed the fear of dying. But that was not all. Paul also had an excited anticipation of the *future* resurrection. He speaks of this joyful anticipation of heaven in the context of a choice between being with closely loved friends in the church at Philippi or going on to be with Christ. For him, the thought of heaven was not better than close friendships, it was *far* better. Friendship is one of life's greatest and most enjoyable treasures. Yet in Paul's perspective all the joy and security of friendship was not to be compared to the "far better" experience of heaven.

What was it that Paul knew about heaven that heightened his joyful expectation? Paul relates to us that the reason for his anticipation is not so much the place as it is the Person. He writes, "... to be *with Christ*... is far better"!

In God's original order the highest experience of man was unhindered fellowship with his Creator. God created within man a God-shaped emptiness that only He could fill. Adam and Eve enjoyed the deep fulfillment of a close relationship with the personal God of the universe. But with Adam's sin everything changed. Sin built a great wall of separation between God and man. This separation removed the potential for fellowship and left that God-shaped emptiness unfilled. Man now stands guilty before a God Who was once his greatest source of joy. This separation is what we call *death*. It has stood through history as man's ever present adversary.

Death has a present and a future impact. Presently, our spirits are dead in that they have no ability to commune and fellowship with a pure and holy God Who is our only source of real satisfaction (Eph. 2:1). The future aspect is the death of our created bodies (Gen. 3:19). The first consequence yields a present loss of fulfillment, the second guarantees a future just and eternal judgment for sin.

It is clear that our world is in constant struggle with these double consequences of sin. Men struggle with their present death by scrambling desperately to fill the emptiness. We run to money, to sensuality, to culturally dictated lifestyles. We grab

for success and clamor for peer acceptance. We build our castles and fill them with our hoarded treasures. We demand our rights and flaunt our independence and yet we find true, lasting fulfillment to be like an elusive dream. As thirsty men crawling across the deserts of our lives, we go from one mirage to another, becoming weaker and more disoriented with each disappointment. All that the world offers will never fill the divine void that sin has left within us.

Our world also wrestles with the future consequence of physical death. For men without God, it is life's greatest uncertainty, the source of their most significant fear. At death, judgment of sin is demanded by God's fair and righteous justice. This truth is hardly palatable to those who are guilty before God. So we struggle to remove the reality of death and its consequences from our lives. Some simply say there is no God. Others see Him as an old grandfather Who is so kind that He would never judge sin. This lopsided caricature of God ignores the truth that His perfect love is only perfect in the context of His justice, righteousness and holiness, all of which necessitate the judgment of sin.

Death is indeed a tragic adversary with whom it is beyond our ability to cope. No one peacefully co-exists with the double impact of death. It is the destroyer of our present joy and future security.

We try, therefore, to forget about death and to center our focus on living by carrying out our doomed attempts at fulfillment. We drown ourselves in the ancient philosophy of the rich fool who proclaimed, "Eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die!" We say that living is gain and dying is loss when in reality living and dying are both loss without God. Our dilemma seems to hold no solution. Death's dilemma seems to lead only to despair.

However, despair is not man's only option! Despair is tempered in the hope that somewhere, somehow there is life that is stronger than death. This hope is fulfilled in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Through the resurrection, Jesus Christ proved that life in God was more powerful than sin and death. He died to cancel the penalty of our sin and rose from the grave to prove that life in Him now reigns supreme.

Even more significant is the fact

that He has offered to share this victorious life with us. He will give it to us as our own possession if by faith we will personally believe in and receive His death and resurrection in our behalf. This is "eternal life" (Romans 6:23). It forever defeats the double dose of death.

The resurrection power of Christ, which He shares with us at salvation, guarantees that we will not be held by death but rather pass from death unto life. Instead of being a door to a just eternal judgment, death now is for us a gateway to eternal fellowship with God. Jesus Christ, through His death and resurrection, has indeed removed the "scariness" from dying and has provided something far better for us.

But, even for those who have received Christ's victorious resurrected life, there is presently a lack of full fellowship due to the continuing struggles of the old condemned sin nature within us. To be sure, life with Christ is now better than ever before. But His filling of our emptiness is tainted by the polluted atmosphere of our flesh and the spiritual smog of our culture. The great joy of heaven will be the enjoyment of full *original* fellowship with Jesus Christ without any diminishing influence of sin. It will be a completion of all we were meant to be.

Why has God withheld a complete appreciation of our future life in Christ from us? I am convinced He has done this to enable us to enjoy our present abundant life in Him. The enjoyment of our earthly life in Christ is a great experience. To fully understand our eternal fellowship with Him would disable us for the here and now. Once we taste the sinless joy of conquered death forever, earth's involvements will lose their draw upon our hearts.

Scripture majestically reflects the profound significance of the resurrection as it proclaims: "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? ... Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:54, 55, 57). Life in Jesus Christ is indeed *far better*.

Rev. Stowell is pastor of Bible Baptist Church, Kokomo, Indiana.



I Have Seen The Lord!

Rebecca Baker

Isolation far deeper than that created by the heavy mourning veil separated Mary of Magdala from her companions. Although the women sympathized in a mutual cause, Mary could take comfort in no one now, for He Who had been all comfort to her was gone.

She was hardly aware of their soft moaning, but the grief it expressed penetrated her own agony, triggering the remembrance of the anguished wailing which had surrounded her two days earlier as Christ had hung on the cross. With that sound piercing her ears and feeling as though she would suffocate, Mary rushed ahead of the others to regain what composure she could before advancing to the tomb.

She wondered if she could ever escape the horror of His death. It was not just that He had died—the Lord had told them His death must come. But for it to have been like this—He, Who was more gentle than any man or woman she had ever known—to be killed like a criminal! She sickened at the bitter memory of seeing Him spat upon, mocked, shamed. She, too, had been hated, but she had deserved it, having been consumed with evil until He—the entirely righteous One—had driven away the seven demons which tormented her. He had shown love and forgiveness—had brought life and hope—had *become* life and hope. She smiled at the thought of His kind eyes and tender touch—then with a jolt remembered why she was here. Rome had crucified her Master and separated the world from His love and power forever!

The other women had caught up with her. Fighting despair she glanced from them to the ointment and spices in her hands—anointment for His lifeless body. Dead—but *near*—just a short walk now to His grave. Man's hatred had not separated them from the blessed task of ministering to Him one last time. With the first touch of peace she had known since the crucifixion, Mary Magdalene joined

her companions and entered the garden gate.

Walking toward the tomb, the women again wondered how they would enter the tomb. They had witnessed the burial by Joseph and Nicodemus and had seen the huge stone rolled into place. As they took the last turn that led to the grave they stopped short. Even in the faint morning light it was clear! The stone had been rolled along its groove and pushed completely aside from the opening of the cave in which Christ had recently been laid! Mary stared hard and felt herself giving way to bitterness and frustration as what little peace she had felt shattered around her. Christ's body had been stolen! What else could it be? What were His enemies doing with the body? Surely He had suffered mutilation enough while dying. What more could they want with Him? Desperate for help, Mary dropped the now useless spices and ran for town. She would find some of the disciples there—perhaps together they could rescue the stolen body.

Shocked and perplexed by Mary's news, Peter and John ran for the tomb. Exhausted, Mary followed, not yet aware that while she had been away an angel had revealed himself to the other women and they had already left, also seeking the disciples with their own message.

By the time Mary hurried back into the garden, Peter and John had come and gone. Painfully alone, she walked toward the sepulchre, giving way to anguished sobs for her crucified Lord and the empty grave. Feeling compelled to look inside, she stooped down, suddenly blinking away her tears as she saw two young men in white sitting where the head and feet of the body would have lain. As if they had been waiting for her, they spoke:

"Woman, why are you weeping?"

"Because they have taken away my Lord and I do not know where they have laid Him."

Receiving no answer from the mysterious young men, Mary turned

away. Another man standing nearby echoed the question she had just answered:

"Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?"

"This man must be the gardener," she thought. "Perhaps he knows something."

"Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away."

No answer. Completely defeated, she looked down. Empty hands. Empty tomb. Empty life . . .

"Mary!"

An electric thrill of recognition passed through her body. That voice—saying her name with the same gentle firmness He had used the day she met Him! How could she have thought He was anyone but Jesus?

Falling to her knees, she clutched Him to her. "Rabboni!" "Blessed Teacher!"

Soothingly taking her hands, He again taught His devoted follower. "Mary, you must not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to my Father, but go to my brethren and say to them, I ascend to My Father and to your Father, and my God and your God."

Eager to do His will, Mary rushed through the garden, which was now bright from the morning sun. Radiating the joy of having seen and heard Him again, she was brimming with the truth she would share for the rest of her life.

"He is Risen! I have seen the Lord!"

*Mrs. Baker is an instructor in Speech Communications at Cedarville College. This reading is reprinted from the cantata **The Cross, The Grave, The Triumph**, © 1979, The Proclaimers, Inc., P.O. Box 19635, Kansas City, MO 64141.*



The Times and the Seasons

Pat Landers Dixon

Have you ever studied the women mentioned in the Biblical passages concerning our Lord's death, burial and resurrection? Elsewhere in this issue we have seen Mary Magdalene's probable reactions. Now let us consider another woman, Mary, the mother of our Lord.

It is impossible to relate to Mary's grief as she watched her Son suffer under the cruel hands which He had fashioned. The lips which He had made to praise Him now mocked the Creator. The water which He so graciously had supplied to satisfy man's thirst was withheld.

Should she not scream, "Don't you know Who this is?" "Listen, I'll tell you how an angel appeared to me. . . ." Yet, we have no record of her trying to persuade the watching men and women that this man was the Messiah, once the Babe she had carried.

I suppose I have always unconsciously pictured Mary at the foot of the cross—so close as to reach out and touch her Son's disjointed body. Why, I imagined her weeping and wailing. Tears incessantly flowed as she stayed as long as she could in that very spot.

But, look at John 19:25; Mary is *standing*. This posture destroys my earlier images. Why would her standing impress me? In studying about Jewish customs of death and burials, I found that most Jewish mothers would have been prostrate with dishevelled hair and torn garments. There would have been tears and wailing. (Ah, at least, my

former mental picture depicted the *average* Jewish mother.) Some families even employed professional mourners (Matt. 9:23, Acts 9:39.)

Yet she *stands* silently. Her Son instructs John to keep her and she leaves *quietly*. Her grief and sorrow surely must have raged within her heart. Is she quiet because she is assured her Son will arise? Does she now know He will conquer death? Or, is she remembering Gabriel's pronouncement so long ago?

She stands, I believe, so that we women can remember her deliberate and undistraught posture and be *encouraged*. When death comes to a beloved child, be *encouraged* to accept that death in the light of the resurrection as Mary did. Be *encouraged* because her Son invites our cares and sorrows and gives peace to the sorrowing.

If she could *stand* and not stoop to the common practices of the defeated mourning of them in whom there is no hope, so can we. *Stand* on the promises of the resurrection.

HAD CHRIST NOT RISEN

Had Christ not risen from the dead,
First-fruits of them that slept,
Then had this sodden, weary world been drowned
In tears that men had wept.

The bitter, futile tears they shed beside
The graves where loved ones lay
Forever in the bosom of the earth,
Returned to dust and clay!

Had He not risen, then the dreadful sum
Of human woe would be
A burden on the very heart of God
Throughout eternity.

O, praise His blessed name forevermore!
He rose that wondrous morn,
And gave the balm of Gilead, the oil
Of joy to them that mourn;

And unto those whom He had washed and saved,
A resurrection day
When broken hearts shall be forever healed
And all tears wiped away!

—Martha Snell Nicholson

ITINERARIES

Rev. Paul Dixon, April 7 Iowa State Youth Rally, Ankeny IA; **8** Conservative Baptist Church, Crestline OH; **21** Illinois/Missouri State Youth Rally, Bloomington IL; **22** First Baptist Church, Arlington Heights IL; **29** First Baptist Church, Louisville OH; **May 6** Windsor Village Baptist Church, Indianapolis IN; **13** First Baptist Church, Germantown OH; **20-23** Grace Baptist Church, Cedarville OH; **25** Northwest Baptist Seminary Commencement, Tacoma WA; **26** Bethesda Christian Schools Commencement, Brownsburg IN; **27** Bethesda Baptist Church, Brownsburg IN; **28** Grace Baptist Schools Commencement, Decatur AL; **June 2** Cedarville College Commencement, Cedarville OH; **3** Berean Baptist Church Commencement, Adrian MI; **4** Beth Haven Baptist Schools Commencement, Louisville KY; **5** Baptist Christian Schools Commencement, Cleveland OH; **7** Timberlake Christian

Schools Commencement, Lynchburg VA; **8** Bethany Baptist Fellowship, Waterford PA; **14** Calvary Baptist Church Academy Commencement, Meadville PA; **21-23** GARBC Council of Eighteen Meetings, Dayton OH; **24** Cincinnati Reds & San Francisco Giants Chapel, Cincinnati OH; **25-29** GARBC National Conference, Dayton OH.

Dr. James T. Jeremiah, April 1-4 Immanuel Baptist Church, Arcanum OH; **8-11** Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fairborn OH; **10-12** Cedarville College Chapel; **15-18** Troy Baptist Church, Garrettsville OH; **20-22** Clintonville Baptist Church, Columbus OH; **May 4-21** Northwest Baptist Seminary, Tacoma WA; **28-30** Odosagih Bible Conference, Odosagih NY; **June 5** Hagerstown Heritage School Commencement, Hagerstown MD; **8** Independent Baptist Fellowship Meeting, Allegany NY; **10-13** Allegany Baptist Church, Allegany NY; **17-20** First Baptist Church, Elyria OH; **25-29** GARBC National Conference, Dayton OH.

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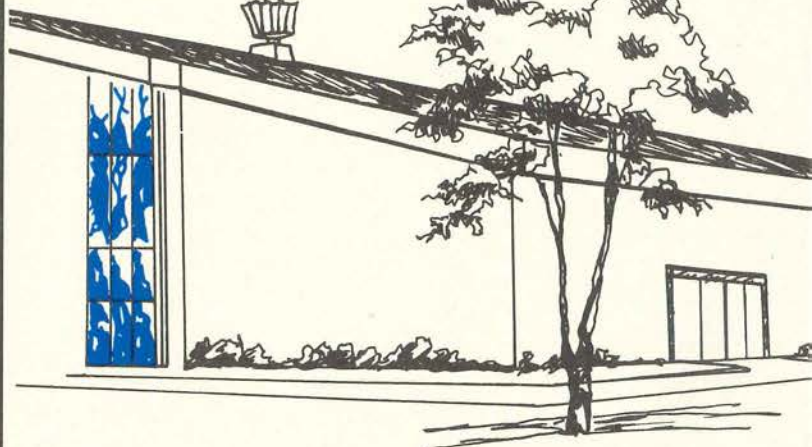
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"I WILL COME AGAIN . . ."

John 14:3